

# MISSOURI CONSERVATIONIST

VOLUME 79, ISSUE 9, SEPTEMBER 2018  
SERVING NATURE & YOU





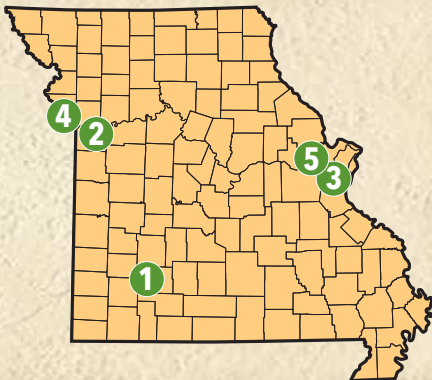
# SHOOTING RANGES



## Outdoor Education Centers



MDC shooting ranges and outdoor education centers are designed to help you become a sharper, safer hunter or outdoors person. Come to shoot targets or attend one of our many outdoor skills programs.



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[mdc.mo.gov/buschrange](http://mdc.mo.gov/buschrange)



*Serving nature and you*

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



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Smooth sumac

## MISSOURI CONSERVATIONIST



### ON THE COVER

Wood duck

📷 **NOPPADOL PAOTHONG**

600mm lens +1.4x  
f/8, 1/400 sec, ISO 400

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# Inbox



## Letters to the Editor

Submissions reflect readers' opinions and may be edited for length and clarity. Email [Magazine@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Magazine@mdc.mo.gov) or write to us:

MISSOURI  
CONSERVATIONIST  
PO BOX 180  
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65102



## HUMMINGBIRDS

I read *Up Front* [July, Page 3]. I have had friends brag about hummingbirds drinking from their palm or fingertip. That is on my bucket list. One did come in to look at something on my t-shirt. Cool magazine.

Dave Turner  
Carrollton

## A DAY IN THE LIFE: WILDLIFE VET

I was happy to catch up with Dr. Sherri Russell in your recent issue [*A Day in the Life of a Wildlife Veterinarian*, July, Page 16]. I am sure she is taking exceptional care of our wildlife, but we really miss the excellent care and treatment she gave my border collies and Siberians. I knew she would be a great asset to the wildlife of Missouri. Thank you for the best magazine in the country.

Carol Clark Waverly

## LOVE FOR THE CONSERVATIONIST

Thank you for the beautiful job you are doing with the magazine. I love all the articles on animals, flowers, and birds of all kinds. I am 73 years old and have been taking the magazine for many years. I look forward to it each month. The pictures are outstanding. I hope you will continue on.

Janet Atwell Springfield

*In addition to the Conservationist and Xplor, MDC's bimonthly kids magazine, you can find access to more great Missouri conservation information at [mdc.mo.gov/magazines](http://mdc.mo.gov/magazines). Subscribe to regional newsletters and browse a list of hundreds of free publications designed to help you discover, explore, and conserve nature. Topics range from natural history to fishing and hunting and improving your acres. These publications are free to Missouri residents. —THE EDITORS*

## FINE FLOATING

My finest memories are from floating Missouri's rivers! Thank you, MDC!

Nancy Eberle via Facebook

*Floating Missouri's streams is a fantastic way to enjoy our state's great outdoors. Find outfitters by stream, get free Stash Your Trash bags, and register for canoeing/floating events at [short.mdc.mo.gov/Zcn](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zcn).*

—THE EDITORS

## FISHING FUN

Thanks so much for the Free Fishing weekends. Took me and my wheelchair to an accessible conservation area in Whiteside, Pike County. I caught some fish and had some fun, all thanks to you.

Joe Lewis via Facebook

*MDC is working to remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from enjoying the outdoors and the activities they love, like fishing. Throughout the state, construction of new facilities and renovations at older properties are providing access to our areas, buildings, and shooting ranges. While MDC cannot guarantee accessibility at any particular site or property, a search on our website at [short.mdc.mo.gov/Zce](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zce) will help you find the area that suits your particular needs.*

*MDC has a variety of devices to help with casting, holding, and reeling. Contact your local MDC office to reserve equipment for your outing. —THE EDITORS*

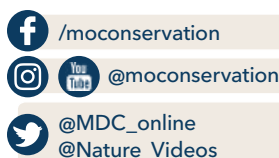


## CORRECTION

Due to a typographical error, the Aztec language referenced on Page 23 of the June issue [*Throwing a Stick With a Stick*] was misspelled as "Hahuatl." According to the World Atlatl Association, the proper spelling is "Nahuatl." —THE EDITORS

DAVID STONNER

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Send a note using our online contact form at [mdc.mo.gov/commissioners](http://mdc.mo.gov/commissioners).





### Want to see your photos in the Missouri Conservationist?

Share your photos on Flickr at  
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email [Readerphoto@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Readerphoto@mdc.mo.gov),  
or include the hashtag #mdcdiscovernature  
on your Instagram photos.



1

1 | Winged bush  
cricket by **Mark  
Beckemeyer**,  
via Flickr

2 | Cottontail  
rabbit by  
**hagerkathleen**,  
via Instagram

3 | Scissor-tailed  
flycatchers by  
**Cherie Heitman**,  
via email



2



3

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# Up Front

with Sara Parker Pauley

✖ I'm often awed by the power of our senses, especially the sense of smell, which experts say triggers emotions and memories of treasured places. When I was growing up in Boone County, my dad would always take the family to "the ole strip pits" that were, at the time, reclaimed coal-mine pits just north of town. We would unload the over-packed station wagon filled with our camping and fishing gear, get the fire going, and head to one of the many lakes to see what we might catch. I recall wild roses growing abundantly there. I remember the fun my dad and I had taking on my twin brothers in a made-up game called Charge the Hill. And I especially recall falling asleep to the smell of our campfire's burning embers.

Bill McCully's story about his first quail hunt at the Atlanta Conservation Area in northwest Missouri on Page 24 reminds us how fortunate we are to have wild places like the one my family and I enjoyed when I was a child. I am blessed that this special family destination has now become Rocky Fork Conservation Area and Finger Lakes State Park, places protected as public lands that can be enjoyed for generations to come.

A couple of months ago, my nephew and I headed out to that special place for a morning of kayaking. As we paddled about together (between sprint races in which he beat Aunt Sara every single time), I shared stories about his dad and the fun we had as kids growing up there. I smiled as I reflected that yet another family memory was being created that very day. As we loaded up the kayaks to head home, I was certain I could smell a campfire burning nearby.

*Sara Parker Pauley*

**SARA PARKER PAULEY**, DIRECTOR  
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[mdc.mo.gov](http://mdc.mo.gov) 3

# Nature LAB

by Bonnie Chasteen

Each month, we highlight research MDC uses to improve fish, forest, and wildlife management.

## FIRE ECOLOGY

### Botany Sampling at Chilton Creek

✧ How does periodic fire change an Ozark forest? MDC Resource Scientist Calvin Maginel is working with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) staff and others at TNC's 5,500-acre Chilton Creek Research and Demonstration Area near Van Buren to track the answer to this question.

In partnership with landowners, MDC, and other agencies, TNC launched its long-term, fire-based ecosystem management study in 1997. According to TNC's website, the goal is to "understand the relationship between biodiversity management and timber and wildlife interests, and to export this knowledge to like-minded partners in the Ozarks."

TNC's Land Stewardship and Fire Manager Tom Fielden said that the study partners began offering fire-management workshops to private land managers this year.

Periodically, Fielden conducts a controlled burn on some of the area's units. During the following growing season, Maginel and other Chilton Creek botanists begin surveying the units' plant life.



A few months after a winter prescribed fire treatment, Chilton Creek botanists identify plants using quadrats (1-meter wooden squares).

Long-term study helps managers better understand the effects of prescribed fire on Ozark plant communities

They said that in units with scattered species remnants, the application of fire helps restore the remnants' diversity and vigor. It even reconnects isolated plant communities, such as glades, woodlands, and bottomlands.

This is good news, particularly for pollinators that depend on specialized plants like Bush's skullcap, which declines in the absence of periodic fire.

Like the Missouri Forest Ecosystem Project, the Chilton Creek study will span 100 years or more. Fielden said preliminary results are promising, and Maginel agreed. "This study will tell us whether restoring prescribed fire to natural landscapes also helps restore botanical diversity."

## Chilton Creek Management Lessons To-Date

### Be patient with the process.

Ground-flora diversity increases after 15 years (but not the first 10 years).

### Expect better turkey habitat.

Prescribed fire opens up the forest and encourages grasshoppers, which turkeys feed on heavily in the fall.



Bush's skullcap

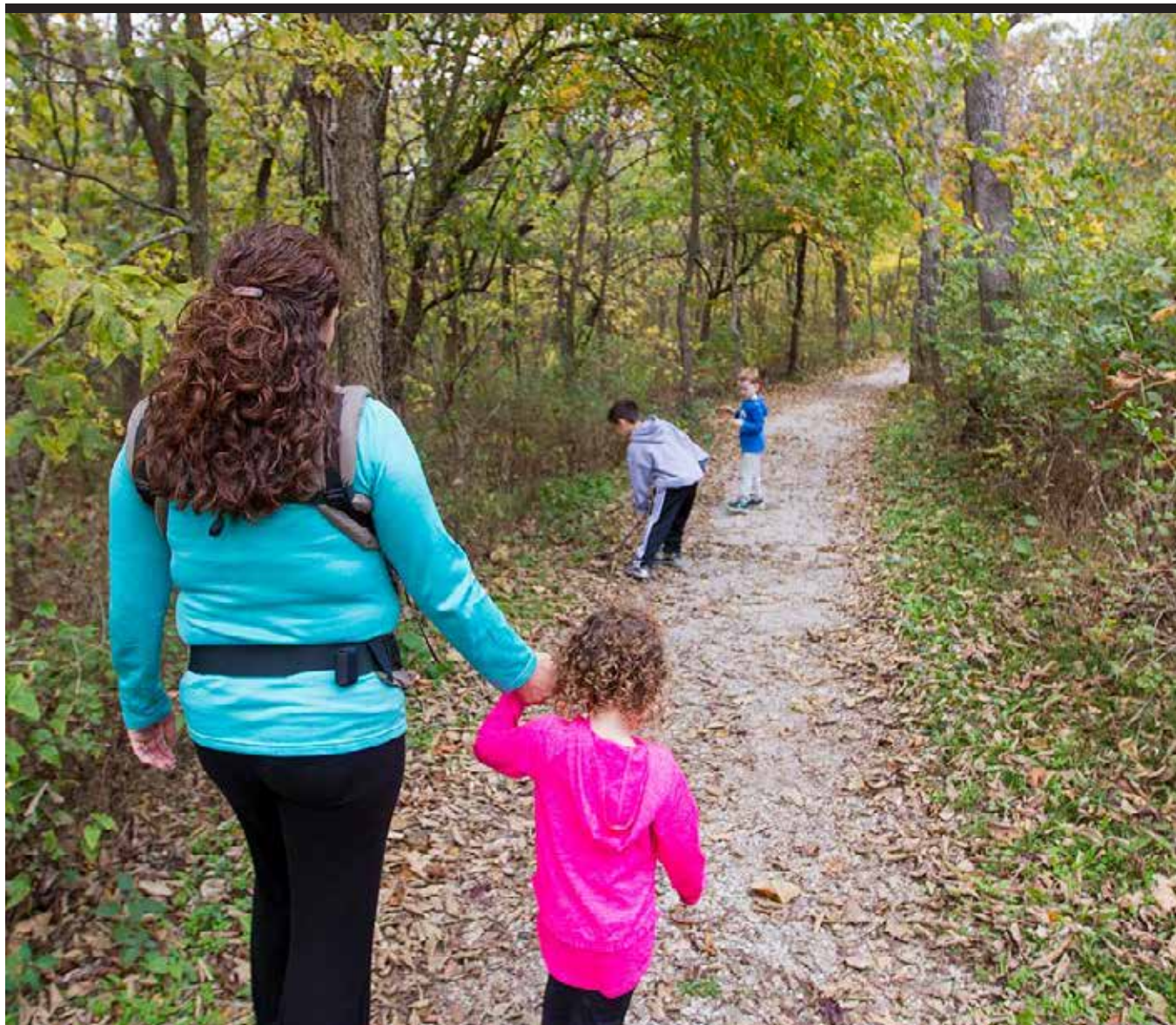
### Prairie plants follow fire.

That means more and better habitat for butterflies, bees, and other pollinators.



# In Brief

News and updates from MDC



## HIT THE WOODS FOR HEALTH

NOW IS A GREAT TIME TO GET OUTSIDE AND DISCOVER NATURE

➔ Cooler weather and the kaleidoscope of color make fall a great time of year to explore the woods. But don't power hike or walk! Slow down. Open your senses to the wonders of the woods. See. Hear. Smell. Taste. Touch. Not only will this mindfulness help you discover nature in new ways — it's good for you!

Research shows being in the woods can help reduce stress and improve immunity and mood. As people relax, blood pressure drops and mood improves.

One research study compared the health effects of walking city streets to walking in the woods. While both activities required the same amount of physical activity, walking in the woods resulted in greater reductions in blood pressure and stress hormones.

Researchers are also studying stress-reducing compounds from trees, known as "phytoncides." Trees release these compounds, like the scent of cedar, into the air. Inhaling them has been shown to reduce concentrations of stress hormones and increase the activity of white blood cells, which are important for fighting illness.

Find great places to walk in the woods at [short.mdc.mo.gov/Z4V](https://short.mdc.mo.gov/Z4V).



# Ask MDC

## Got a Question for Ask MDC?

Send it to [AskMDC@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:AskMDC@mdc.mo.gov)  
or call 573-522-4115, ext. 3848.

### Q. I took this photo on the Meramec River. What species of snakes and fish are these?

➔ These two northern watersnakes appear to be fighting over the same bullhead catfish.

One of the most common snakes in Missouri, northern watersnakes (*Nerodia sipedon sipedon*) are active from early April until October and like to bask on branches, logs, and rocks near the water's edge. The fish could be either a yellow bullhead (*Ameiurus natalis*) or black bullhead (*Ameiurus melas*).

Small fish — mostly nongame species — make up 75 percent of the diet of these nonvenomous snakes.

It's not uncommon for smaller watersnakes like these to work together. It's also possible these snakes coordinated their attack to

herd the fish into shallower water, making it easier to catch and subdue. The snake will eat the catfish, spine and all. But the catfish may get in one final punch against its foe. If still alive when swallowed — and they often are — it is not uncommon for the catfish to wriggle and puncture the inner wall of the snake's belly. Even if it protrudes completely through the skin, the snake will likely survive the painful encounter and the fish will be completely digested.

### Q. I look at this tree every time we visit Lone Elk Park. We are wondering whether this is some growth or just an anomaly?

➔ This is a burl, typically caused by a tree undergoing some form of stress, such as insect damage, bacteria, fungi, or some other environmental injury.



Burl

Sometimes burls grow as rounded, woody swellings on a tree's trunk. Other times, they form beneath the ground, attached to the roots, and are generally undiscovered until the tree dies or falls over. Almost all burls are bark covered, even when underground.

Burls can grow up to 3 feet in diameter and may have many buds or sprouts. As the wood grain swirls around each bud trace, contorted and deformed patterns form. This makes some burl wood — particularly walnut and hard maple — highly prized by furniture makers and sculptors.

A tree can develop burl wood and still be considered healthy. However, removal of the burl could damage the tree and for that reason it isn't recommended.



Northern watersnakes





Gizzard shad

**Q. Why do various species of fish school in huge numbers near the surface of quiet water at the Lake of the Ozarks? They don't seem to be feeding, but just circle aimlessly.**

→ The fish you are seeing are young gizzard shad born this spring. Their movements may look aimless, but they're feeding. Gizzard shad are planktivores, meaning they feed on small

aquatic animals in the water. They do this by filtering food out of the water as it passes through their gills. They won't hit a lure and likely taste terrible, but they are nonetheless one of the most important fish we have in the lake. From the smallest bluegill to the largest catfish, Missouri's gamefish rely heavily on gizzard shad as a primary food source for part or all of their lives.

## AGENT ADVICE

from

**Parker Rice**

BUCHANAN COUNTY  
CONSERVATION AGENT

September ushers in several hunting seasons in Missouri — dove season Sept. 1, teal season Sept. 8, and deer and turkey archery seasons Sept. 15. Make sure you're ready! Buy your permits. These are available from vendors across the state, through our MO Hunting app, and online at [mdc.mo.gov/buypermits](http://mdc.mo.gov/buypermits). Stay hydrated. September is often still hot, so take the necessary precautions. Archers, if you're hunting from a tree stand, use a harness. Dove hunters, practice proper firearm safety and always use ear and eye protection. Let someone know your hunting plan. If you're hunting in a multi-use area, be respectful of other visitors. That way, everyone has a good time.



## What IS it?

Can you guess this month's natural wonder?

The answer is on  
Page 8.



# WE ARE CONSERVATION

Spotlight on  
people and partners

## Susan Essman

➔ She's a volunteer and former board member at the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Home and Museum near Mansfield. In 2016, she worked with MDC's Community Conservation Planner Ronda Burnett to install the museum's 4,500-square-foot butterfly habitat area.

### She's a champion for native plants

The native plant installation helped the museum achieve several goals. It honors Wilder's love of nature, helps keep stormwater out of a nearby creek, and it sustains pollinators. It took a while for the planting to flourish, but Susan had faith. "Ronda told us it would take three years to hit its peak, and she was right," she said.

### In her own words

"If you're planning a large landscaping project, call MDC before you start. Ronda helped us choose the native plants that would achieve our goals, and she led us to grants to help pay for them. Now we've got something that's just really cool."

by Cliff White



Susan loves seeing the wildflowers at the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historic Home and Museum. "This planting has exceeded my expectations in every way," she said.

What's **your** conservation superpower?

## WHAT IS IT?

### POLYPHEMUS MOTH CATERPILLAR

Polyphemus moth caterpillars (*Antheraea polyphemus*) abound in forests, grazing on vegetation. They feed on more than 20 species of Missouri trees but favor silver maple, oak, birch, and hazelnut. They spin oval cocoons, usually wrapped in the leaves of a food plant. These drop to the ground in autumn, but sometimes the caterpillar attaches its cocoon to a plant's stem, where it persists through the winter.





# CWD: Info to Know for the 2018–2019 Deer Season



Missouri Department of Conservation is testing deer for **chronic wasting disease (CWD)** during the 2018–2019 deer season in an effort to limit the spread of the deadly disease in Missouri.

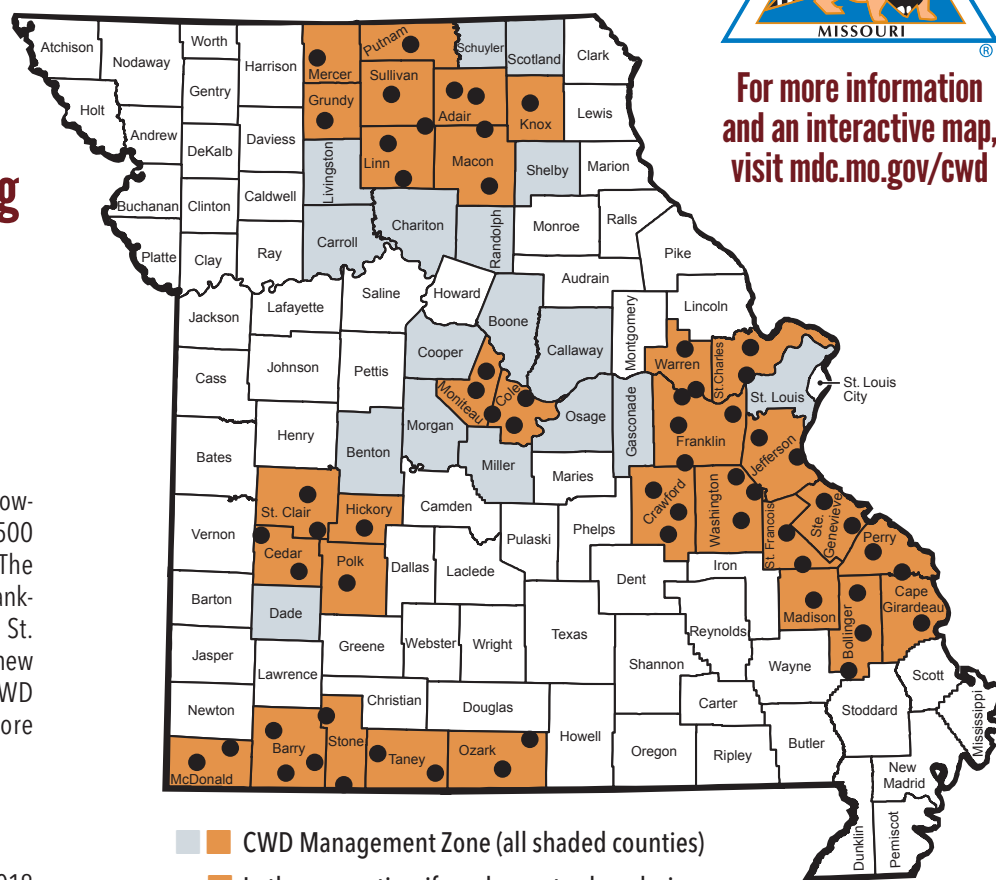
MDC confirmed 33 new cases of CWD following the sampling and testing of nearly 24,500 free-ranging Missouri deer last season. The new cases were found in Adair, Cedar, Franklin, Jefferson, Linn, Macon, Perry, Polk, St. Clair, and Ste. Genevieve counties. These new cases bring the total positive cases of CWD among free-ranging deer to 75. For more information, visit [mdc.mo.gov/cwd](http://mdc.mo.gov/cwd).

## New Counties Added to CWD Management Zone

Based on the findings from the 2017–2018 season, MDC has added seven new counties to its CWD Management Zone: **Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Grundy, Madison, McDonald, Mercer, and Perry.**

These seven new counties join 41 existing counties in MDC's CWD Management Zone. The zone consists of counties in or near where cases of the disease have been found. Mercer County was added because of the proximity of a CWD-positive deer found in southern Iowa. McDonald County was added because of CWD detection in north-west Arkansas.

The 48 counties are: Adair, Barry, Benton, Bollinger, Boone, Callaway, Cape Girardeau, Carroll, Cedar, Chariton, Cole, Cooper, Crawford, Dade, Franklin, Gasconade, Grundy, Hickory, Jefferson, Knox, Linn, Livingston, Macon, Madison, McDonald, Mercer, Miller, Moniteau, Morgan, Osage, Ozark, Perry, Polk, Putnam, Randolph, Schuyler, Scotland, Shelby, St. Charles, St. Clair, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, St. Louis, Stone, Sullivan, Taney, Warren, and Washington.



■ CWD Management Zone (all shaded counties)

■ In these counties, if you harvest a deer during Nov. 10–11, 2018, you must take it (or the head with at least 6 inches of neck attached) on the day of harvest to a designated CWD sampling station.

● Sampling station location

MDC has increased the availability of antlerless permits and expanded the firearms antlerless portion in the seven new counties to help stabilize deer numbers in these counties and limit the spread of the disease. MDC has also removed the antler-point restriction for Grundy and Mercer counties, which are now included in the zone.

## Help Limit the Spread

To help reduce the risks of spreading CWD, MDC encourages hunters to dispose of carcass parts by leaving or burying them on the immediate area where the deer was harvested and field dressed, or by bagging carcass parts and placing them in trash containers destined for a landfill.

## New Counties Added to Feeding Ban Restricted Area

The seven counties added to the CWD Management Zone are also included in MDC's ban on feeding deer and providing mineral supplements, effective July 1. Supplemental feed and minerals can increase deer-to-deer contact, which can spread CWD.

According to the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*, the placement of grain, salt products, minerals, and other consumable natural and manufactured products used to attract deer is prohibited year-round within counties in the CWD Management Zone. Exceptions include feed placed within 100 feet of any residence or occupied building, feed placed in such a manner to reasonably exclude access by deer, and feed and minerals present solely as a result of normal agricultural or forest management, or crop and wildlife food production practices.

**The feeding ban does not apply to wildlife food plots or other agricultural practices.**

## Mandatory CWD Sampling November 10 and 11

MDC will require hunters who harvest deer in 31 counties of the CWD Management Zone during opening weekend of firearms deer season, Nov. 10 and 11, to present their deer — or the head with at least 6 inches of neck attached — at one of 61 CWD sampling stations throughout the counties.

The 31 counties include those where CWD has previously been detected, those within approximately 5 miles of a positive, select counties along the Missouri-Arkansas border near where cases of CWD have been found in Arkansas, and the seven counties added to the CWD Management Zone.

The 31 counties for mandatory sampling are: **Adair, Barry, Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Cedar, Cole, Crawford, Franklin, Grundy, Hickory, Jefferson, Knox, Linn, Macon, Madison, McDonald, Mercer, Moniteau, Ozark, Perry, Polk, Putnam, St. Charles, St. Clair, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Stone, Sullivan, Taney, Warren, and Washington.**

MDC asks hunters to field dress and Telecheck their deer before taking them to a CWD sampling station.

Hunters can get test results for their CWD-sampled deer about four weeks after sampling online at [mdc.mo.gov/CWDTestResults](http://mdc.mo.gov/CWDTestResults).

For more information, visit [mdc.mo.gov/cwd](http://mdc.mo.gov/cwd) and look for *Mandatory Sampling*. Information is also available in the *2018 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information* booklet, available where permits are sold.

## Voluntary CWD Sampling All Season

MDC will again offer voluntary CWD sampling of deer harvested in any of the 48 counties of the CWD Management Zone during the entire deer season — Sept. 15 through Jan. 15, 2019. For more information on MDC's voluntary sampling efforts, including locations, visit [mdc.mo.gov/cwd](http://mdc.mo.gov/cwd), *Voluntary Sampling*.

MDC asks hunters to field dress and Telecheck their deer before taking them to a CWD sampling station.

Hunters can get test results for their CWD-sampled deer about four weeks after sampling online at [mdc.mo.gov/CWDTestResults](http://mdc.mo.gov/CWDTestResults).

## Share the Harvest

Deer donated to Share the Harvest must be tested for CWD if harvested from any of the 11 counties where CWD has been found. These deer can only be donated through approved processors in or near any of the 11 counties that are participating in the Share the Harvest CWD Testing Program. The 11 counties are: **Adair, Cedar, Cole, Franklin, Jefferson, Linn, Macon, Perry, Polk, St. Clair, and Ste. Genevieve.**

Hunters can have their deer sampled for CWD before donating the animals. They must present the CWD barcode number provided at the sampling location to the participating processor as proof of sampling. Hunters may also present their deer for donation to approved processors in or near any of the 11 counties and the processor will collect a tissue sample or the head for testing.

Deer harvested outside of the 11 CWD-positive counties do not need to be tested for CWD and may be donated to any Share the Harvest processor.

For a list of participating Share-the-Harvest processors, visit [mdc.mo.gov/share](http://mdc.mo.gov/share).

There have been no cases of CWD infecting people, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strongly recommends having deer tested for CWD if harvested in an area known to have cases of the disease. The CDC also recommends not eating meat from animals that test positive for CWD.

## Additional Efforts

MDC will again contact landowners of 5 acres or more in areas very near to where multiple infected deer have been found to offer no-cost CWD Management Seals to further reduce deer numbers and help limit the spread of the disease.

MDC will also work with landowners on a voluntary basis to remove potentially infected deer in immediate areas where CWD has been found through postseason targeted culling.







Peck Ranch  
Conservation Area

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
DAVID STONNER

# Peck Ranch

## A Drive-Through Tour of Living History

FROM CONSERVATION VICTORIES TO ANCIENT ARACHNIDS,  
THE AREA PROVIDES ELK VIEWING AND MORE

by Candice Davis





Because of its pristine and diverse habitat, Peck Ranch CA has served as the launching ground for species restoration starting with wild turkeys, then white-tailed deer, eastern collared lizards, and elk.



A visit to Peck Ranch Conservation Area (CA) is more than a jaunt on a trail or a quick reconnection to nature. It's a living history lesson in the progress Missouri has made on its promise to protect and manage our state's wildlife. The elements of this history lesson range from the magnificent and mighty to the small and almost invisible wildlife that call the area home. Just as diverse as the wildlife and habitats are the ways the area can be enjoyed. From overnight primitive camping and extensive trail opportunities to viewing wildlife from the comfort of a vehicle — the intensity of a visit to Peck Ranch is entirely up to the visitor.

Depending on the time of year, a visit to Peck Ranch CA, in northwest Carter County and eastern Shannon County, north of Fremont, can be filled with echoing elk bugles, views of countless white-tailed deer just before sunrise or sunset, strutting wild turkeys, and the bouncy white tail of a striped skunk as it forages through the Timothy grass, red-topped clover, and other vegetation in the fields along Road One. The area has served conservation restoration projects since the 1950s, and just inside the refuge gate are sights of its diverse resident wildlife to prove it.

Preston Mabry, manager of Peck Ranch CA, says the reason for the area's diversity is intense habitat management.

"We have an incredible range of habitat types from old-growth forest in the bottomlands to open glades on the hill-tops and woodlands of various successional stages all within a relatively close proximity," Mabry said.

Those habitat types exist and are managed within the nearly 24,000 acres of the area, which is why it's known as a cornerstone conservation area and tells of so many important conservation victories.

PECK RANCH, STEGALL MOUNTAIN, ELK: DAVID STONNER;  
TURKEY, COLLARED LIZARD: NOPPADOL PAOTHONG



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## History of the Area

“Before the area was purchased by MDC, the land was farmed, and its timber used to fuel an iron ore company just to the south,” Mabry said. “Because of its remoteness, Peck Ranch still had wildlife on it, despite declines elsewhere. It was initially purchased because it was one of the few areas left with an eastern turkey population.”

In 1952, the final tracts of what would become Peck Ranch CA were acquired for turkey restoration. These tracts included the fenced refuge, roughly 11,000 acres. From 1954 to 1979, turkeys trapped at Peck Ranch and other areas of the state were relocated to 142 sites in 87 counties. The area served white-tailed deer repopulation efforts as well in those early years. In the 1980s and 1990s, collared lizards were re-established at Peck Ranch, and much later, in 2011, the area’s refuge served as the destination for elk relocated to Missouri from the Appalachian Mountains in Kentucky.

Today, Peck Ranch is actively managed using sustainable timber harvest, prescribed fire, mechanical thinning, and

open-field green vegetation for elk and white-tailed deer, as well as watershed management. The wildlife diversity viewable from the roadways alone is testament to the habitat management that occurs on the area.

## Off the Beaten Path

“Stegall Mountain is an area that I always like to send visitors to,” Mabry said. “Sometimes you have to get off of the beaten path, but the view from some of the glades is well worth it.”

Outside the refuge gate, Stegall Mountain presents a beautiful Ozark glade, where eastern collared lizards sun themselves on the rocks on warm days. Glades are dry, sunny openings in the woodlands where the bedrock is close to the surface, so the soil is very shallow. Plants and wildlife that survive on glades are hardy, like wildlife that survive in the desert. Glades feature native grasses and wildflowers, which support grasshoppers, pollinators, and other insects that in turn support collared lizards and wild turkeys. Populations of the colorful collared lizards have shown an overall decline



Stegall Mountain





“

There's something about seeing the wildlife in person and hearing the elk bugles resonate through the area that is an education you can't get from a book or the internet.

—DAVID HASENBECK, MDC ELK PROGRAM MANAGER

due to loss of their Ozark glade habitat, making them a Species of Conservation Concern. Now they thrive at Stegall Mountain, thanks to years of glade restoration and habitat management. They live among rocks on dry, open, south- or southwest-facing limestone, sandstone, and granite glades. The best time to see collared lizards is during the warmest part of a day that surpasses temperatures in the low seventies.

“Now you can see collared lizards on almost all the glades on Stegall Mountain, as well as some glades within the refuge,” Mabry said.

Also, among the rocks of the glade live striped scorpions, the most common scorpion

in the United States and the only scorpion to live in Missouri. Although the sting of this scorpion is painful, it is seldom life-threatening. Reclusive arachnids, they are rarely seen unless found hiding under a rock. This species provides a rich history lesson, as scorpions first appeared in the fossil record as aquatic animals about 430 million years ago.

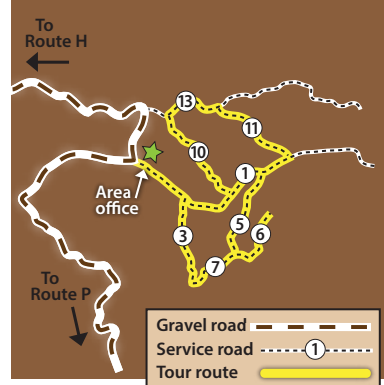
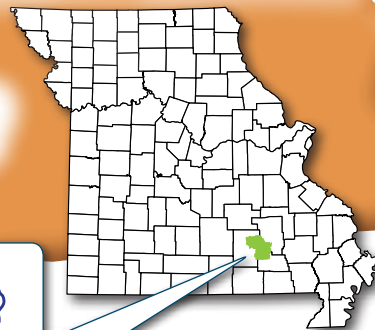
The view Mabry referenced is a grand vista, accessed from the large glade rocks or by climbing the fire tower at the top of the mountain. Stegall Mountain is 1,348 feet above sea level, providing an expansive view of the conservation area and beyond — a breathtaking scene of the forested Ozarks.



Striped scorpion



# Take a driving tour



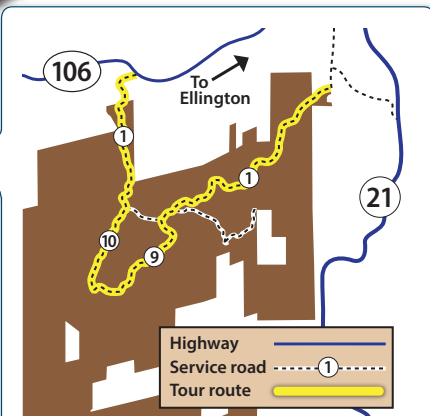
## Peck Ranch Conservation Area

The driving loop is marked. The loop begins at the office and runs along roads 1, 11, 13, and 10, with an additional driving route that runs along roads 3, 7, 6, and 5.



## SEE THE ELK AT PECK RANCH AND CURRENT RIVER CONSERVATION AREAS!

The 346-square-mile elk restoration zone includes nearby Peck Ranch and Current River conservation areas, which both offer driving tours.



## Current River Conservation Area

The driving tour runs from Highway 106 to South Road out of Ellington. The route includes roads 1, 10, and 9, passing the shooting range, the log cabin, and the fire tower.

## Practical Tips for Visitors

Several miles of hiking trails, a self-guided driving tour along the rugged area roads, and primitive camping facilities set the stage for a history lesson at Peck Ranch CA. Visitors should expect rough roads and primitive restrooms, along with an unlimited amount of wildlife-viewing opportunities. The best times to see the most wildlife are sunrise and sunset when the elk and deer, particularly, are likely to be out browsing the food plots.

"This area is only accessible via fairly lengthy gravel roads. Some lower profile vehicles may have trouble traversing the terrain," Mabry said.

Visitors are encouraged to get a map of the area in advance and check the MDC and Ozark Trail websites for area closures. Twin Pines Conservation Education Center in Winona is a good place to stop for information about local history and pick up maps and brochures.

There's also game hunting outside of the refuge portion of the area under statewide regulations, so visitors should be aware of hunting seasons before going off the beaten path.

## Elk Driving Tour

The opportunity to view 75 to 80 elk at a time is still a novelty in Missouri, but it's very possible at Peck Ranch CA. Due to habitat loss and overhunting by settlers — usually for skins, leaving the meat behind — elk were absent from the state since about 1865. Recent restoration efforts center around their novelty and their importance as a game animal. MDC will begin to consider managed elk hunts when the herd surpasses a population of 200 animals.

For now, Missourians can enjoy elk via the self-guided driving tour, which begins at Peck Ranch CA's office and is marked throughout the area. It's open sunrise to sunset seven days a week — except during managed deer hunts, fall firearms deer season, and when roads are closed due to weather. Check [short.mdc.mo.gov/ZcT](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/ZcT) before visiting to ensure the area is open.

David Hasenbeck has been involved with the elk restoration since its inception in 2010 and became the elk program manager in 2013. Hasenbeck advises visitors to Peck Ranch to plan to see more than elk during the driving tour.

# Elk Visitors Make Million-Dollar Impact on Region



Bull elk

## When elk restoration began

in Missouri in 2011, one of the projected benefits was an increase in tourism to the Missouri Ozarks. It was hoped that the chance to see the majestic buglers would entice travelers to visit the area. That dream is now realized, as shown by MDC Resource Science Division's recently completed survey that determined the economic impact elk brought to the area.

Visitor surveys conducted at the two self-guided driving elk tours, at Peck Ranch and Current River conservation areas, determined elk brought nearly \$1.3 million to the region in 2016. Throughout

the year, MDC conducted on-site visitor surveys at the two elk tour loops. Clerks, stationed at randomly selected locations at various dates and times, interviewed exiting parties and asked them where they were from, their reasons for visiting the area, their associated spending, and whether they saw elk, among other wildlife.

The survey also estimated overall visitation and user attitudes. The data included regional economic impacts, such as food, lodging, and transport expenses. Over 11,000 visitors toured each of the areas in 2016, and only spending by nonlocal visitors was included in the economic impact estimate.

"It's not uncommon to see deer, turkeys, or even something more uncommon such as a bobcat or a bald eagle on this tour," he said.

Scenic vistas ranging from Ozark Mountain glades to Ozark streams and spectacular fall foliage are to be expected, he said. Elk, on the other hand, are living animals, which don't show up on demand. When they do, though, they're spectacular to see and can range from just a few to up to 75 or 80 animals in one group.

"The easiest time to see the elk is early in the morning or late in the afternoon when they tend to be feeding in the open fields," Hasenbeck said. "It's best to look for them shortly after sunrise or an hour or so before sunset."

Binoculars are handy, and so is the ability to be quiet. Feel free to take photographs and to get out of the vehicle for a better view — but do not disturb the elk or other wildlife in any way. It's never acceptable to approach an elk and doing so can be dangerous.

"If you have a large group of people or loud children, the noise will make a difference in what you see," he said. "The elk are somewhat tolerant of vehicles on the driving tour as long as visitors stay back a couple of hundred yards from where they [elk] are."

Hasenbeck said families and groups of all sizes, including school groups take the self-guided driving tour. Elk bugling occurs in late September and October when rivaling bulls gather their harems together for breeding season. This is when you're more likely to witness the bulls' sparring as they establish dominance hierarchies.

"There's something about seeing wildlife in person and hearing the elk bugles resonate through the area that is an education you can't get from a book or the internet," he said. "This is an opportunity to see and learn about something wonderful and wild in our state." ▲

*Candice Davis has served the Missouri Department of Conservation as a regional media specialist for 10 years. She has a passion for communicating about topics such as native species restoration and invasive species elimination.*



Don't forget your binoculars!



A close-up photograph of a waterfowl's foot, likely a duck or goose, resting on a dark, textured surface. The foot is yellowish-orange with dark webbing. A silver metal band is wrapped around the middle toe. The band has the number '10-9' and the name 'DAVID LAIT' visible. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some green foliage at the bottom.

# Getting the Bands Back Together

ALUMINUM BANDS ON WATERFOWL GIVE HUNTERS, RESEARCHERS A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF A BIRD

by Andy Raedeke



# Ask any duck or goose hunter—

what's the first thing you do after retrieving a downed bird?

More than likely they'll say they look to see if the bird is banded. This piece of aluminum with a number and contact information on it is the key that unlocks many of nature's mysteries for hunters and researchers alike.

## A Personal Glimpse at the Mysteries of Migration

I recall one fall season when I harvested two banded mallards, and how these bands drew me into a story about all the places these two ducks may have been and why. I was astonished to learn that both mallards were banded in mid-August of that same year near Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

I harvested the first bird, a young mallard, in Saskatchewan over 100 miles northwest of where it was banded. My curiosity was piqued. Why would a recently hatched duck leave one wetland in the fall, fly northwest over countless other wetlands, and then finally decide to stop more than 100 miles away at a wetland that did not look much different than all the others?

I harvested the second mallard, an adult, later that fall in Missouri on a day we were seeing lots of migrating ducks. I couldn't help but wonder if he had departed earlier that day from one of the same Saskatchewan wetlands I had hunted in October.

These two bands gave me, the waterfowl hunter, a deeper appreciation of all the connections and importance of wetlands from Missouri to Saskatchewan. The information from the

millions of bands reported has drawn me, the researcher, into a larger story about population dynamics, habitat, and migration.

## Reporting Bands Tells a Larger Story

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) uses banding information to determine how many ducks hunters can harvest without causing long-term population declines. Hunters can safely harvest about 11 percent of the mallard population when numbers are high and habitat conditions are good, as they have been the past several years. If duck numbers and habitat conditions decline beyond a certain point, plans are in place to decrease the number of ducks harvested. Researchers predict that a 45-day duck season would reduce mallard harvest rate to about 10 percent, and a 30-day season with a three-mallard (one hen) daily bag limit would result in a harvest rate of about 6 percent.

MDC uses banding information to help identify where to invest in waterfowl habitat conservation. Based on band recoveries in Missouri, we know that over 50 percent of the mallards harvested come from the prairie and parkland regions of Canada. This region also provides critical nesting habitat for nine other duck species and countless other species, including 22 species of land birds, 15 species of shorebirds, and eight species of water birds, all of high conservation priority. MDC contributes about \$250,000 each year to conservation work in







### Missouri: A Melting Pot for Waterfowl

Missouri's central location makes it an important migration stop and wintering destination for birds from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Missouri hunters have reported bands from 11 Canadian provinces and 41 states in the past 10 years.

MARSH PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY RYAN TEBB; MAP SOURCES: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, ESRI, DELOREME, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, INCREMENT P CORP.







MDC wood duck banders Andrea Pearson and Ryan Kelly carefully load rockets in the predawn hours. Once the ducks are on their bait site, Pearson and Kelly detonate the rocket, which propels a net over the unsuspecting wood ducks. The ducks are quickly removed from the net to prevent injuries.

this important region. These funds are pooled with contributions from many other states and matched by Ducks Unlimited (DU), USFWS, and the Canadian Wildlife Service to generate over \$19 million for waterfowl habitat conservation in Canada. Not a bad return on Missouri's initial investment of \$250,000.

Of course, it's migration timing that remains the critical question for hunters. When do the birds show up and where do they go once they get here? We know from band data that hunters in north Missouri harvest the most mallards on average during late November and that they harvest as many mallards in early November as they do in late December. In mid-Missouri, the peak harvest of banded mallards occurs about a week later, and more mallards are harvested later in the season than during the beginning of the season. Hunters in southern Missouri harvest slightly more mallards toward the end of the season, but the difference from early in the season to the end of the season is minimal.

## Wood Ducks Banded in Missouri

Wood ducks are one of only a few species of waterfowl that nest in Missouri. Because of their secretive nature, it's nearly impossible to estimate the size of their population based on counts. We can use banding data to monitor the overall status of wood duck populations, but there is a catch. It requires banding a lot of wood ducks. Each year, states and USFWS work together to band over 30,000 wood ducks. We band over 1,000 in Missouri each year.

Banding wood ducks is a challenge. The basic idea is to lure wood ducks to a bait site and then shoot a rocket net over the top of them before they fly away. MDC Wildlife Biologist

Ryan Kelly has banded wood ducks around the state. He and his staff scout a good location and then place corn out each day to entice wood ducks, but that's not all who shows up.

"I've seen raccoons, deer, opossum, skunks, geese, crows, and pigeons on our bait sites looking for a free meal," Kelly said. "Once we counted more than 25 raccoons on the site at the same time. They can eat a lot of corn!"

Knowing when to take the shot is the biggest challenge.

"Wood ducks can take a long time congregating at the edge of the water and it takes a couple of brave souls to start the parade onto land and up to the bait site. Once there, an eagle or hawk flying overhead can spook them back to the water, and you just hope they come back," Kelly said. "I've been burned by being greedy and waiting too long for more birds to get on the bait, or by shooting too soon when I knew I could have caught more by waiting."

When everything comes together, Kelly and his banding crew may catch and band 100–200 wood ducks with a single shot.

The early mornings, battles with mosquitoes, and other challenges faced by wood duck banders has led to discoveries for hunters and managers alike. Imagine the surprise of Ryan Tebo, a Minnesota duck hunter, who harvested a wood duck last fall that was banded six years earlier, shortly after it hatched in southeast Missouri.

"It was the first banded bird I've ever taken, so it was an exciting experience to input the band number and see the information associated with that bird," Tebo said. "It made for an unforgettable hunt and memory for me."

Based on band recoveries like the one from Tebo, we now know that some wood ducks migrate north during the summer where wetlands may have better food and cover. In early fall, most of the wood ducks that remain in Missouri, as well as those that moved north during summer, migrate as far south as Louisiana.





### Recovery Locations of Wood Ducks Banded in Missouri From 2008–2017

Each triangle represents a band recovery location.



MAP SOURCES: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, ESRI, DELORE, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, INCREMENT P CORP.

Wildlife Management Biologist Andrea Pearson uses custom banding pliers to secure an aluminum band to a juvenile wood duck. The band fits loosely so it doesn't harm the bird. The band number, age, and sex of the bird are recorded and then the duck is released.





## Canada Geese Banded in Missouri

Canada geese are one of the few other species of waterfowl that nest in Missouri. In contrast to wood ducks, Canada geese are easy to spot and, at times, seem like they are everywhere. Band data provides us important insights on how geese move about in both urban and rural environments. As with ducks, banding data provides important information about survival and the role hunting can play in helping manage this population. To get this information, we band geese throughout Missouri.

Banding geese poses different challenges than banding wood ducks. Rather than using rocket nets, biologists round up geese into a pen and then band them. Erin Shank, an urban wildlife biologist and experienced goose bander, says it's not as easy as it sounds.

"The first challenge is figuring out the right time in June when the adult geese will likely still be flightless and the goslings are still unable to fly," Shank said. "Geese go through a period of molt in the summer when they lose their old wing feathers and grow new ones.

"Those older geese must recognize the department triangle on our trucks," she speculated, with a laugh. "As soon as we arrive, they suddenly straighten up with heads held high. You can tell they are ready to bolt at our first move. In places we haven't banded, the geese are so much more cooperative. Goose round ups are all about strategy and figuring out how to herd the geese where we want them to go. There's nothing worse

than when a few geese break ranks and then they all start stampeding."

When everything falls into place, Shank and her crew will catch anywhere from 12–100 geese at a site and will band over 1,000 geese within a two-day period.

Goose banding also provides a unique opportunity for people to get an up-close look at a wild species. Tom McCrackin, past Missouri Ducks Unlimited chairman, has enlisted DU to join forces with Shank to provide kids the opportunity to participate in a goose round up at Six Flags in St. Louis. The kids, along with their parents or grandparents, join the fray and it can be messy. At the end of day, McCrackin presents each child with a green ribbon, otherwise known as the Green Badge of Courage, for their bravery facing these large birds and not letting a little mess spoil the fun.

As with wood ducks, band data has led to discoveries about Missouri's Canada geese. We often think of them as resident species that never leave Missouri. Banding data shows otherwise. Many geese that are too young to nest or have failed nesting depart Missouri in late May on a "molt migration" to the coast of Hudson Bay in northern Manitoba, Canada. There they will molt old wing feathers and replace them with new. Once in northern Canada, they are more likely to encounter polar bears and wolves than people. In September, they begin making their way back to Missouri, and most have returned by early October.





## The Next Chapters

As a hunter, I'll keep looking for a band each time I retrieve a bird in hopes of getting a glimpse into their story. As a researcher, I look forward to what we may learn from the larger story as hunters continue to report bands. I encourage you to contribute to the story. If you harvest a banded bird, please report it at [reportband.gov](http://reportband.gov). ▲

*Andy Raedeke is a resource scientist with the Missouri Department of Conservation.*

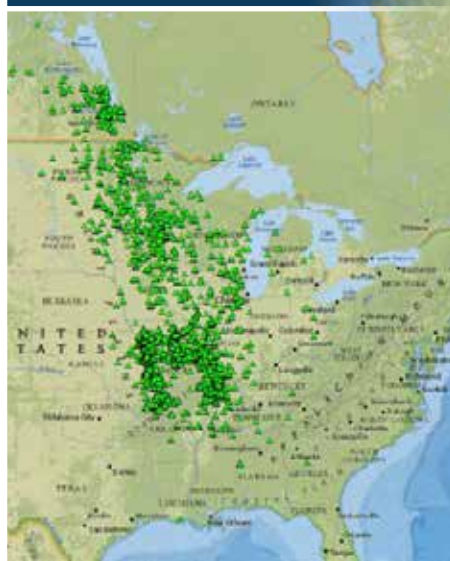


Volunteers and MDC staff herd Canada geese toward a holding pen. Once rounded up, geese are banded and examined to determine age and sex. Adults and goslings are reunited once released.



## Recovery Locations of Canada Geese Banded in Missouri From 2008–2017

Each triangle represents a band recovery location.



MAP SOURCES: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, ESRI, DELOMRE, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, INCREMENT P CORP.

## Missouri Waterfowl Hunters as Citizen Scientists

Waterfowl hunters play an important role in helping us understand and manage waterfowl every time they report a band. In the past 10 years, Missouri hunters have reported more than 25,000 bands representing 16 species of ducks, six species of geese, and some hybrids. This information is used to identify which factors have the most influence on population size, to prioritize places for habitat conservation, and to inform hunting regulations (season length, bag limits, and season timing). If you are ever lucky enough to shoot a banded bird and wonder if it is worth reporting, please know it is time well spent. This information contributes to ensuring sustainable waterfowl populations for the future.

### Number of bands recovered during the past 10 years in Missouri

Ducks	5,623
Mallard	4,131
Wood duck	642
Northern pintail	291
Blue-winged teal	185
Green-winged teal	149
Lesser scaup	62
Gadwall	45
Ring-necked duck	35
Redhead	16
American black duck	14
American wigeon	14
Hooded merganser	10
Canvasback	9
Common goldeneye	8
Northern shoveler	6
American black duck X Mallard hybrid	3
Common merganser	2
Other hybrid duck	1
Geese	22,027
Canada goose	9,480
Lesser snow goose	2,323
Ross's goose	535
Greater white-fronted goose	150
Greater snow goose	30
Cackling goose	26
Snow X Ross's goose hybrid	3
Total	27,650







# Always Worth the Drive

RETURNING TO YOUR FAVORITE AREA KEEPS  
TREASURED MEMORIES ALIVE

by Bill McCully

The Atlanta Conservation Area (CA) in northeast Missouri is my favorite conservation area. My dad grew up in the town of Atlanta and, as a boy in the 1930s, he hunted the woods and Long Branch Creek bottomlands that would become the Atlanta CA in the 1960s.

Dad was thrilled when this large, diverse landscape became public. He enjoyed hunting it, even though he had plenty of access to local private lands. I still visit this area at least one or twice every year. It's a long drive from my home in Lee's Summit, but it's always worth it.

## Reconnecting With the Area

On a recent visit, my truck bounced to a stop in its familiar parking lot next to the maintenance area. I released Kevin, my German shorthair, slid the old shotgun from its case, and donned my hunting coat. Kevin and I headed due north and passed a pond that is being rehabilitated. I made a mental note to check it when it reopens because I am certain that the bass fishing will be good when it does. Kevin raced ahead and began a quartering search for quail. It's very weedy here, and there is always lots of cover.





We passed a hardwood forest and entered a sunflower field that was established for dove hunting. Opening-day bird numbers were pretty good this year, but my shooting wasn't. Still, it was fun, and we gave the area plenty of use that day. We skirted the edge of the sunflower field, now drab and lifeless, and continued on our way. We soon came to an area of small brushy draws and rolling hillsides. I stopped at a familiar spot and looked over one hillside in particular.

Kevin ran ahead, hitting the likely spots, and my mind rolled back the years. Ten, 20, 30 — 50 years went by.

### A Priceless Memory

The date is Nov. 11, 1967. I am standing in this exact spot and carrying the same shotgun. It is a warm, sunny Saturday and the second day of the Missouri quail season. A big hammer-headed, raw-boned, liver-and-white pointer, appropriately named Rebel, races along the hillside in front of me. As he cuts from right to left, he suddenly slams into a point with his head cocked back to the right and his tail perfectly erect.

My dad says, "All right, it's your shot, go ahead." I am 13 years old, and this is the season I carry my own new shotgun. Dad has promised me first chance at a quail. Words cannot describe the excitement I feel. I don't know how Mom and Dad afforded the new shotgun, but they did, and this is my chance.

Nervously, I walk in ahead of the dog, and a covey of perhaps 20 birds erupts. I raise the shotgun and fire — and it's a clean miss. Then I remember Dad's advice. "Focus on a single bird and try to tell if it's a hen or a rooster. If you can tell that, you are focused enough."

Fortunately for me, a couple of stragglers rise from the hillside weed patch and head toward the timber to the east. I concentrate hard on one bird, and I can tell it is a rooster. I swing the gun and shoot again. The sky explodes in feathers, and my first bobwhite quail tumbles to the ground. Rebel is on it instantly and makes a perfect retrieve to Dad. At that moment I wouldn't trade that quail, that dog, or that shotgun for a million dollars.

Today, I wouldn't trade this memory for a million dollars.

### Things Change, but There's Still Plenty to Enjoy

Back in the 1960s and 1970s, there were more quail everywhere, and this area is no exception. During my last visit, I watched Kevin hunt the hillside hard, but the birds stayed out of sight. Still, I saw plenty of evidence that MDC is managing the area for quail — brush control, edge-feathering, and food plots with milo and foxtail. In time, the numbers will be better. A lot depends upon weather and luck.

We continued north and found another dove field. I picked up some empty shot shell cases to throw in the parking lot trash can, and I wished that everyone would pick up their own empties. I got some consolation, though — the high number of shell



The author's father, John McCully, circa 1975 with his gentle shorthair, Pat, and his hard-going pointer, Buster





cases proved that someone is as poor a dove shot as I am. We continued on to a row-crop field and hit the edges. No luck there either, although the habitat looked great, and I was certain that the birds were there. It was likely that they were tucked away under some out-of-the-way place in heavy cover, and there was just too much for one dog to work all of it.

I bid Kevin toward the west, and we went nearly to the main area road before turning south and heading back toward the truck. We again hit the edges and found a couple of rabbits and more squirrels. Truly, this area is a paradise for a squirrel hunter — both fox and gray squirrels abound.

## Memories Make it Personal

Kevin and I loaded up and headed to another spot where the quail hunting is better but without the special memories of this one. Atlanta CA is the place where I brought my then new bride 35 years ago when she wanted to know what quail hunting was like. She still goes with me sometimes on warm fall days.

It was also the place I came the day after my father's funeral to wander the hillsides and try to make sense of it all. My father loved the concept of public lands managed for wildlife. He witnessed the demise of the prairie-chicken population on the prairies east of Atlanta where he worked on farms, and he recognized that, if we could leave just a little for the wildlife, it would be there for generations to come. He understood how fragile wildlife populations could be. I think the idea that there would be wildlife on conservation areas long after his passing gave him some measure of comfort, and it does for me as well.

2018 will mark 51 years of my chasing the quail on those hillsides. I hope November 11 is a warm, sunny day.

I also hope you have a favorite area that you visit regularly, too. If not, why not find one? Missouri has nearly 1,000 conservation areas, and all of them can be special to someone. ▲

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*Bill McCully is a retired engineer. In his spare time, he likes to chase quail and fish for trout.*



## Find Your Own Favorite Haunt

The 4,809-acre Atlanta CA in Macon County features hardwood forests, grasslands, wetlands, and several natural oxbow lakes. It is a great place to hunt, fish, watch birds, and enjoy outdoor Missouri in solitude — or with family and friends.

Missouri's conservation areas vary in size from small stream accesses to multi-thousand-acre wildlife management areas. Some have been around a long time, and many were created after the Design for Conservation sales tax was enacted by popular vote in 1976. Whether small or large, old or new, all are unique, and all can become a favorite haunt.

Browse MDC's collection of nearly 1,000 conservation areas and find one to make your personal favorite at [mdc.mo.gov/atlas](https://mdc.mo.gov/atlas).





# Get Outside

in SEPTEMBER

→ Ways to connect with nature



Black bear

## You Gonna Eat That?

Black bears gorge to prepare for winter hibernation. But don't share your picnic with them! Keep black bears wild and let them enjoy their natural fare — grass, berries and other fruits, nuts and seeds, fish, frogs, small rodents, and more.



## All-Natural Pesticide

You may spot **black-and-yellow garden spiders** in your garden this month. These harmless visitors build webs in gardens and grassy areas and help keep your flowers and veggies pest-free.

## Nuts, Nuts, and More Nuts

If you enjoy nuts, this is your season! Hazelnuts, black walnuts, and hickory nuts begin to ripen.



Hazelnuts

Black walnuts

Shagbark hickory

KANSAS CITY REGION

## Firearm Optics

Saturday, Sept. 15 • 9-11:30 a.m.  
Lake City Shooting Range  
28505 E. Truman Road, Buckner, MO 64016  
Registration required.  
Call 816-249-3194 beginning Aug. 15  
We will discuss selecting and mounting optics, as well as sighting and zeroing your scope.

### Natural Events to See This Month

Here's what's going on in the natural world.



Katydids sing in trees at night



Fawns lose their spots



Eastern tiger salamanders move to ponds in the rain



Find more events in your area  
at [mdc.mo.gov/events](http://mdc.mo.gov/events)

## Bon Voyage

Monarch butterflies begin migrating south in large numbers, sometimes traveling 3,000 miles.



OZARK REGION

## Ladies Fishing Day

Saturday, Sept. 8 • 7:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

Maramec Spring Hatchery

21304 Maramec Spring Dr., St. James, MO 65559

No registration required. Call 573-265-7801 for more information

Women, all ages

Women of all ages will have a chance to trout fish in a special, roped-off area of the spring. The area will be stocked with 100 tagged fish, and when an angler catches one, she can win an assortment of prizes ranging from a fishing rod to a vest, tackle box, or net. There is no fishing license or daily trout tag required for women during this event. Informal instruction will be offered including basic trout-fishing tactics, casting, and cleaning and cooking your catch. Bring the whole family to enjoy the day!



Persimmons  
start to  
ripen



Freshwater  
jellyfish  
may be  
abundant  
in  
reservoirs

# Xplor

INSPIRE THE  
CHILDREN  
IN YOUR LIFE  
TO GET  
OUTSIDE



Looking for a way to coax your kids to put down their devices, climb off the couch, and get outside? Then check out **Xplor**, MDC's free magazine for kids and kids at heart.

Six times a year, **Xplor** serves up stories about Missouri's coolest critters, niftiest natural places, and liveliest outdoor activities. The magazine is free to Missouri residents (one subscription per household, please). Out-of-state subscribers pay \$5 per year; out-of-country subscribers pay \$8.

DON'T KEEP THE DOOR CLOSED  
ANY LONGER. SIGN UP FOR  
YOUR FREE SUBSCRIPTION AT  
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Serving nature and you®





# Places to Go

## SOUTHEAST REGION

### Current River Conservation Area

Contributing to Missouri's wild past, recreational present, and forest future

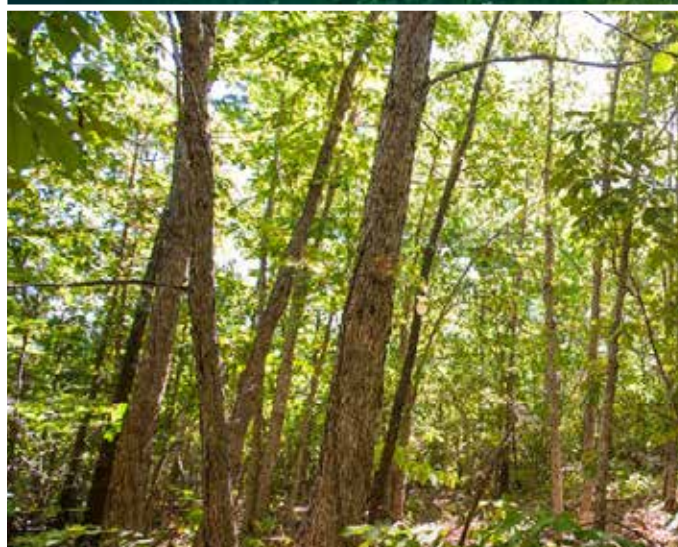
by Larry Archer

✕ **With access to its namesake** — one of Missouri's most popular floating waterways — miles of trails, two designated natural areas, wildlife viewing, and two shooting ranges, Current River Conservation Area (CA) has plenty to offer the perfect family fall vacation.

But beyond its amenities, Current River CA also played an important role in Missouri's conservation history and continues to do so today. In the 1930s, the area's white-tailed deer population was tapped to help restock depleted herds in other areas. Along with Peck Ranch CA, the area constitutes a significant portion of the state's elk restoration zone, said Steve Orchard, Current River CA manager.

"When MDC restocked elk at Peck Ranch, we did a bunch of habitat work here and beefed up our open-land management," Orchard said. "A lot of people go to Peck Ranch part of the day and then over here part of the day."

The area is also set to play an important role in the future of forest management. As one of two Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project (MOFEP) sites, the area is included in a 100-year study to assess the effects of different forest-management techniques on the forest and its inhabitants.

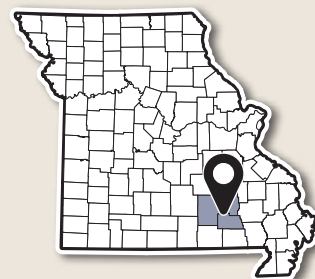


6,000 of Current River CA's more than 27,700 acres of woodlands are monitored as part of the Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project, a 100-year study of forest management practices.





Blue Spring Natural Area  
on Current River CA









## CURRENT RIVER CONSERVATION AREA

Current River Conservation Area consists of 29,291 acres in Shannon, Reynolds, and Carter counties. There are three entrances: 3 miles west of Ellington on Highway 106, on South Road in Ellington, and on Reynolds County Road 626.

N 37° 13' 17.04" | W 90° 58' 19.92"  
[short.mdc.mo.gov/ZqC](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/ZqC) 573-663-7130

### WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU VISIT

-  **Bird-Watching** Included in the National Audubon Society's Black River Watershed Important Bird Area ([short.mdc.mo.gov/Zq9](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zq9)). The eBird list of birds recorded at Current River CA is available at [short.mdc.mo.gov/Zqs](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zqs).
-  **Camping** Individual campsites. No amenities. Seasonal closures may apply.
-  **Fishing** Bass, catfish, goggle-eye, suckers, sunfish
-  **Hiking** There is a 1.5-mile walking path from Deer Run Fire Tower to Buford Pond. Also, good hiking on area access trails.
-  **Hunting Deer and turkey.** Regulations are subject to annual changes. Please refer to the *Spring Turkey* or *Fall Deer and Turkey* booklets for current regulations. Also squirrel.
-  **Shooting Ranges** Static archery range. Firearms range with 25-, 50- and 100-yard targets.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN YOU VISIT



Summer tanager



Elk



Timber rattlesnake



Black bear



# Wild Guide



## American White Pelican

*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

### Status

Transient visitor in summer and winter

### Size

62 inches, wingspan 108 inches

### Distribution

Statewide



### Did You Know?

People persecuted pelicans and many other fish-eating birds, viewing them as competition for game fish. Pesticide-use during the midcentury saw pelican populations dwindle. Outlawing DDT and creating wild-bird reservations in their breeding territories helped save pelicans from extinction.

**T**hese large water birds fly with their heads back on their body, not with their neck extended. Their white body and black wing tips contrast their orange-yellow legs, pouch, and huge bill. Yet, when flying high in formation, they can resemble a flock of much smaller snow geese.

—MIKAYA WALLIS

### LIFE CYCLE

American white pelicans do not breed in Missouri. Rather, their breeding territory ranges from eastern Colorado to Canada's northwest territories and from the Dakotas to northern California. They nest in colonies of several hundred pairs, often on islands, which helps them avoid predators. The female usually lays two to three eggs in a depression of gravel or sand.

### FOODS

White pelicans hunt in shallow waters, dipping their heads under water to scoop up fish, crayfish, tadpoles, and other aquatic animals. Pelicans occasionally hunt in groups, herding fish into a school.

### ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIONS

Pelicans help control fish and aquatic populations, and, as ground-nesting birds, they can be prey to predators.

NOPPADOL PAOTHONG



# Outdoor Calendar

❖ MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION ❖

## FISHING

### Black Bass

Impounded waters and non-Ozark streams:  
Open all year

Most streams south of the Missouri River:  
May 26, 2018–Feb. 28, 2019

### Bullfrogs, Green Frogs

June 30 at sunset–Oct. 31, 2018

### Nongame Fish Giggling

Impounded Waters, sunrise to sunset:  
Feb. 1–Sept. 14, 2018

Streams and Impounded Waters,  
sunrise to midnight:  
Sept. 15, 2018–Jan. 31, 2019

### Paddlefish

On the Mississippi River:  
Sept. 15–Dec. 15, 2018

### Trout Parks

Catch-and-Keep:  
March 1–Oct. 31, 2018

Catch-and-Release:  
Nov. 9, 2018–Feb. 11, 2019

➔ Dove season opens Sept. 1, followed closely by deer and turkey archery seasons on Sept. 15. Get the latest on limits, methods, and other regulations with the *2018 Migratory Bird Hunting Digest* and the *2018 Fall Deer and Turkey* booklet. Both publications are available at MDC regional offices and online at [short.mdc.mo.gov/ZZf](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/ZZf).



For complete information about seasons, limits, methods, and restrictions, consult the *Wildlife Code of Missouri* at [short.mdc.mo.gov/Zib](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zib). Current hunting, trapping, and fishing regulation booklets are available from local permit vendors or online at [short.mdc.mo.gov/ZZf](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/ZZf).



## Free MO Hunting and MO Fishing Apps

MO Hunting makes it easy to buy permits, electronically notch them, and Telecheck your harvest. MO Fishing lets you buy permits, find great places to fish, and ID your catch. Get both in Android or iPhone platforms at [short.mdc.mo.gov/Zi2](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/Zi2).

## HUNTING

### Bullfrogs, Green Frogs

June 30 at sunset–Oct. 31, 2018

### Coyote

Restrictions apply during April, spring turkey season, and firearms deer season.

Open all year

### Crow

Nov. 1, 2018–March 3, 2019

### Deer

Archery:

Sept. 15–Nov. 9, 2018

Nov. 21, 2018–Jan. 15, 2019

Firearms:

▶ Early Youth Portion (ages 6–15):

Oct. 27–28, 2018

▶ November Portion:

Nov. 10–20, 2018

▶ Late Youth Portion (ages 6–15):

Nov. 23–25, 2018

▶ Antlerless Portion (open areas only):

Nov. 30–Dec. 2, 2018

▶ Alternative Methods Portion:

Dec. 22, 2018–Jan. 1, 2019

### Dove

Sept. 1–Nov. 29, 2018

### Groundhog (woodchuck)

May 7–Dec. 15, 2018

### Pheasant

Youth (ages 6–15):

Oct. 27–Oct. 28, 2018

Regular:

Nov. 1, 2018–Jan. 15, 2019

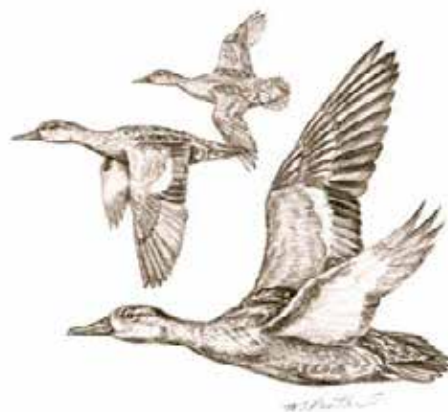
### Quail

Youth (ages 6–15):

Oct. 27–Oct. 28, 2018

Regular:

Nov. 1, 2018–Jan. 15, 2019



### Rabbit

Oct. 1, 2018–Feb. 15, 2019

### Sora, Virginia Rails

Sept. 1–Nov. 9, 2018

### Squirrel

May 26, 2018–Feb. 15, 2019

### Teal

Sept. 8–23, 2018

### Turkey

Archery:

Sept. 15–Nov. 9, 2018

Nov. 21, 2018–Jan. 15, 2019

Firearms:

▶ Fall: Oct. 1–31, 2018

### Waterfowl

See the *Waterfowl Hunting Digest* or visit [short.mdc.mo.gov/ZZx](http://short.mdc.mo.gov/ZZx) for more information.

### Wilson's (Common) Snipe

Sept. 1–Dec. 16, 2018

### Woodcock

Oct. 15–Nov. 28, 2018





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River oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) glimmer in the September sun. This pretty native grass grows statewide in bottomlands, stream valleys, and other moist places. It blooms August through September. Deer, turkey, and other wildlife eat the seeds, and the caterpillars of several butterfly species eat the leaves.

📷 by **Noppadol Paothong**